

# *To the Chairman and Members of the Northampton Rural District Council.*

FEBRUARY, 1914.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year 1913, with the usual tables. There are only two villages in the district in which building operations are being carried on—Duston and Weston Favell, and I have based my calculation as to the increase of population on the number of houses built and occupied in these villages multiplied by the average number of persons per house. In this way the population works out at about 6,800, which figure I believe to be approximately correct.

The total number of births during the year was 145—69 males and 76 females, which is the largest number of births for the last six years. This gives an average of 21·3 births per 1,000, against 18·5 in the previous year, whilst in 1910 it was as low as 16 per 1,000.

The total number of deaths at all ages was 162, giving a ratio of 23·8 per 1,000. The deaths at Berry Wood Asylum, however, of persons not belonging to this district, numbered 82, and deducting these we get a nett result of 80 deaths, with a ratio of 11·7 per 1,000. This is 10 more deaths than in the previous year, and the ratio in the last six years has varied from 7·9 to 12·2, so that the ratio this year is rather higher than usual. There were four deaths this year from infectious disease—one from enteric fever, one from scarlet fever and two from diphtheria. These deaths are commented upon in the account of the infectious diseases during the year, as also the deaths from tubercular disease, of which there were seven, exactly the same number as in the two previous years. There were only 2 deaths from cancer, 8 from heart disease, and 5 from respiratory diseases. Ten deaths were in persons over 80 years of age.

The total number of deaths in children under one year of age was 10, with a ratio per 1,000 nett births of 69. The number in this class varies considerably, in 1911 the ratio was 109, whilst in 1909 it was as low as 33, so that this year it is rather below the average for the district. There was only one death from diarrhœa and one from abdominal tuberculosis, the rest were from diseases that could hardly be prevented.

Causes of death in children under one year of age occurring in this district during the last seven years:—

Convulsions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Zymotic Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Bronchitis and Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Congenital Malformation, Premature Births and Atrophy	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	28
									58
									—

This table was drawn out in answer to a circular from the Local Government Board of August last. It shows a very low rate of mortality compared with the rest of England and Wales and that the mortality in this class is largely due to the last class of diseases on the list. It is also lower than in the neighbouring Hardingstone district, but I regret to say that the mortality from diarrhœa is larger in this district than in the Hardingstone.

Table II. shows the number of infectious cases notified during the year. The total number was 44, including cases of tuberculosis. This is perhaps slightly above the average, but it is only lately that cases of tuberculosis have been included in this table, so that it seems more than in some previous years. Of these cases one was due to enteric fever; three cases of diphtheria were notified, 23 of scarlet fever and 16 of different forms of tuberculosis.

The case of enteric fever occurred at Lower Heyford, it was removed to the Northampton General Hospital and died there; it was only after a post mortem examination that it was found to be enteric and then notified. Precautionary measures were taken and there was no spread of the disease. The man had been working on the railway away from home till he was taken ill.

Three cases of diphtheria have been notified, but besides these one fatal case was reported in January after death from the Northampton General Hospital. This child was admitted into the Hospital on November 27th, developed diphtheria early in January and died on January 22nd, so it evidently contracted the disease in the hospital, where several other cases developed about that time. Another fatal case occurred at a public house in Weston Favell in July, and during the last weeks of December two other cases have been reported, one also at Weston Favell and one (fatal case this year) at Buttocks Booth, more than a mile away. It is difficult to account for the origin of these isolated cases, but a very large number of cases of sore throat and diphtheria are prevalent in Northampton just now.

Of the 23 cases of scarlet fever, 15 occurred in our district and 8 at Berry Wood Asylum, these latter are attributed by Dr. Harding to contact at first with infected visitors from the town. The fatal case of scarlet fever (puerperal fever?) occurred in a woman at Stow Hill after her confinement. The notification was first sent to another medical officer of health in error, and I did not receive it till the woman was dead. The house was in a very insanitary condition, the cellars were damp and the drainage very defective. All these matters have now been rectified. The cases in Duston were pretty clearly traced to contact with town cases. One case at Heyford contracted the disease at Coventry, and the other cases happened at the time of the Autumn manœuvres, and we attributed them to the children flocking into Weedon to see these manœuvres, as there were a good many cases of scarlet fever in Weedon at that time. The case of scarlet fever at Weston Favell brought out several practical points. It occurred in an isolated group of about six cottages, and there had been a previous case in a cottage two doors away which had never been notified, the parents treating the case themselves and not calling in a doctor. As the children had been playing together the cause of the disease was obvious. A prosecution for non-notification was brought but dismissed, seemingly on the ground that there was only hearsay evidence and no one but the parents had seen the child when ill or in the peeling stage. This shows the extreme difficulty of carrying out the law in these cases.

One case of scarlet fever was notified at Bugbrooke. It was the case of a girl who had been received from London into a cottage at Bugbrooke for a fortnight's change of air at the cost of the Fresh Air Fund. She was removed to the Hardingstone Fever Hospital, and your Council have had to pay for her treatment there and also the expenses of her journey back to London with the Sanitary Inspector. If these children are sent into country villages some steps should be first taken to know that they do not come from an infected London district. Altogether three of our cases of scarlet fever have been treated this year at the Hardingstone Hospital.

The following schools have been closed on account of infectious disease during the year:—

Duston schools for one month on account of mumps.

Billing schools for one month for measles.

Heyford schools for six weeks in April for measles and for a fortnight in October for scarlet fever.

**TUBERCULOSIS.**—Thirteen cases of pulmonary tuberculosis have been reported and three of other forms of tuberculosis. Of these six of the former and one of the latter have proved fatal. One case of tubercular peritonitis and one of tubercular pelvis have been under treatment at the Northampton General Hospital, and one young child died very soon from abdominal tuberculosis.

Of the thirteen cases of pulmonary tuberculosis four have been receiving treatment either at the Hospital or some Sanatorium, whilst two were reported as inmates of the Workhouse—both of which have died. One has left the district to live with relations. One had been treated in London with tubercular injections and came home in the last stage of the disease—living only a few weeks. Three occurred at Weston Favell in one family—the father is dead—the mother worked in a pinafore factory at Northampton, but to prevent contagion the work is now sent to her and she does it at home. They all refuse to go into a sanatorium, and whenever I visit them



their windows have been closed in spite of my protests. The two remaining cases are very slight doubtful ones and are practically convalescent. Printed instructions are given to these cases, with disinfectants when necessary, and after a death the disinfection of rooms, clothing, &c., is carried out.

#### HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACTS.

Number of houses inspected	...	...	...	...	...	...	70
„ unfit for habitation and demolished...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
„ of Closing Orders made	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Structural defects remedied after informal notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	36

The structural defects remedied consist of repairs to roofs and windows, paving and draining of yards, whitewashing and plastering of rooms, &c. All these repairs (except one outstanding one) have been carried out after informal notice.

At Duston, plans have been passed for four new workmen's houses and one Baptist Chapel, also additions to two existing houses, and two good villa residences have been erected. One new house has also been built at Harpole.

At Weston, one ruined house has been pulled down and two very nice cottages erected in its stead. Maycock's Yard has been greatly improved, one house has been pulled down, giving more light and air to the others, and the gardens have been properly fenced and the paths re-made altogether: this now makes a good yard out of what was once almost the worst place in the village. Picket's Row also has been re-paved and some of the outbuildings demolished, letting in more light and air.

A new estate is being developed close to the Golf Links on the outskirts of Northampton but in the parish of Weston Favell. All the houses are detached or semi-detached small villas, and will form a small suburb to the town.

SEWAGE SCHEMES.—The sewage tank at Duston has been working satisfactorily and no complaints have been received—the effluent is fairly good. This tank has been working now for some years and a large amount of sludge has accumulated in it; it is shortly to be cleaned out and, if found necessary, a sludge chamber will be added to it.

The new sewage scheme at Billing is working well and the ditch is clean and free from deposit.

A sewage scheme for Weston Favell is urgently needed, and your Council have applied to the Town Authorities asking them to take the sewage of this village. No answer has yet been received, although the Town Council have had the matter under consideration for more than a year, but the necessity for some such arrangement is urgently needed. In the meantime the sewage is running into a temporary cesspool.

I am pleased to say that very shortly your Council will be making a weekly collection of pail closets in the villages of Bugbrooke, Heyford and Weston Favell. This matter has received the sanction of the Rural Council and the necessary steps are being taken to carry it out. I hope in a very few weeks it will be in working order.

WATER SUPPLY.—Duston and Weston Favell are now supplied with water from the town of Northampton. Kislingbury has its own supply from a reservoir fed by a spring on a hill beyond the village. The supply at Heyford has been extended during the year, three new stand pipes have been erected and the old ones replaced by new ones. Every house in the village is now able to get a good pure supply from one of them.

A water supply has been laid on to Little Billing by Lady Wantage from a spring which at one time helped to supply Northampton, the only drawback is that the water is very hard.

Mr. Watts has also brought a supply of water from the hill above Harpole to supply his cottages in this village, the supply is plentiful and good, and if necessary might be extended to the whole village.

## SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

**COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.**—There are at present 31 registered cowsheds and dairies in the district—one more than last year. 73 inspections have been made, 19 informal notices have been served as regards limewashing and cleanliness and three as to dirty floors. All these matters were at once rectified. On the whole the cowsheds are kept in a clean state, but the paving of some is not satisfactory, however, this defect is being remedied whenever an opportunity occurs.

**SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.**—There are at present six places where slaughtering is carried on—one less than last year; the one at Weston Favell having been closed as the owner now does all his slaughtering in the town. Fifteen inspections have been made, three informal notices served as regards limewashing and one as to dirty floors. No unhealthy carcases have been found.

**BAKEHOUSES.**—There are 12 of these. 18 inspections have been made; one notice served for a defective ceiling and one for limewashing, and both have been rectified. There are no underground bakehouses and they are all kept in a clean condition.

**FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.**—There is now only one factory in the district, the one at Harpole having been closed in the early part of the year. The fish in an ornamental pond at Harpole were poisoned in the beginning of the year and it was strongly suspected to be due to the escape of dye or some other matter from this factory. The factory was closed shortly afterwards. The state of the other factory has been quite satisfactory. There are 22 workshops in the district, 30 inspections have been made and two informal notices served as to limewashing which have been attended to. There are also a number of outworkers' shops at Harpole which are inspected from time to time and are all in a clean state.

### NUISANCES UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.

Insanitary closets and ashpits	...	...	...	34	informal notices served.
Defective and choked drains...	...	...	...	32	„
Cottages insufficiently ventilated	...	...	...	5	„
Pigs improperly kept...	...	...	...	1	„
Dirty outhouse	...	...	...	1	„

All these notices were at once attended to and rectified.

Two cases of overcrowding were also served with notices. They were in the same family and have given us much trouble; they are now in a larger house in another village of the district.

No case of puerperal fever has occurred during the year, so no disinfection under the Midwives Act has been called for. A County Council Nurse has during the year been visiting four of our villages giving instructions to mothers as to the treatment of their children. The Notification of Births Act has not yet been adopted. I am strongly of opinion that action in this matter should come from the County Council so that there may be a uniform procedure throughout the County. A District Nurse is also working in the village of Great Billing.

**HOUSING ACCOMMODATION.**—The Local Government Board have intimated their wish to have a detailed account of the housing accommodation in this district appended to my annual report. I have therefore gone into the matter in some detail in my report to the Hardingstone District Council, but as the conditions in the two districts are almost exactly similar I shall in this only point out the variations in the two districts.

The cottage accommodation as given in my first table enclosed herewith is very similar in the two districts.

In the second table, showing the rents paid, no less than 99 out of 152 were at the rate of 2/- or under per week, whilst in only 3 cases was the rent over 3/- per week.

As I have pointed out in the other report these figures have only been taken from houses inspected during the last two years under the Housing and Town Planning Act. and as the lowest class of houses are first inspected probably in the future we shall find that there is a much greater proportion of higher class cottages.

In the third table, which shows the number of persons working outside the district, the figures can only be approximate, though I have taken some trouble to make them as accurate as possible, they are however in my opinion probably underestimated. It must be remembered also that many of these are heads of families and have numerous others dependent on them; to get the true number of these residing in the district the total must be multiplied by 3 or 4. Several of the same family often work in the town, so that strict accuracy seems to me impossible. In Harpole, besides the large numbers working in the town, there are a considerable number of out-workers for manufacturers in Northampton, but this is the only village with any out-workers. At Duston a large number of workmen's dwellings have been erected during the last few years entirely for town workers, as this village is almost continuous with the town. Weston Favell is also close to the town and a number of town workers live here; few new workmen's cottages have been erected in this village however, but a considerable number of small villa residences are springing up.

The conclusions I have drawn from these tables are set forth at some length in the report I have previously mentioned, and as they do not vary I shall not recapitulate them here, but hope to enclose a copy of that part of my report bearing on these matters from my Hardingstone annual report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

G. H. PERCIVAL,

Medical Officer of Health.



## COTTAGES IN NORTHAMPTON RURAL DISTRICT.

1 sitting room	1 bedroom	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	61
1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
2	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
3	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
								<hr/> 165 <hr/>

## RENTS.

1/- per week	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
1/3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
1/6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
1/9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
2/-	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
2/3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
2/6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
2/9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
3/-	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
4/-	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
5/-	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
								<hr/> 152 <hr/>

Number of persons residing in the district who work out of the district, mostly in the town:—

Great Billing	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Bugbrooke	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60
Dallington	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
Duston	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	195
Harpole	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	83
Lower Heyford	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
Kislingbury	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	87
Weston Favell...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	94
								<hr/> 579 <hr/>

This includes workers of all ages living in houses the rent of which does not exceed £16 per annum. Persons living in houses above this rental are not included. In Lower Heyford, about half work in the town, the remainder being employed at Weedon Barracks; those working in the town bicycle backwards and forwards every day, a distance of six miles. In Bugbrooke, some also work at Weedon Barracks, but many work on the railway at some distance and only come home for the week end. The remainder work in Northampton.